Are You at Risk for Osteoporosis?

Osteoporosis means porous bone, which causes the bone to become weak and brittle. Due to the strength and fragileness of the bones, just about any movement can cause a fracture to the bones. Low levels of calcium and loss of nutrients that are needed in your body can also provoke this type of disease. Most fractures occur in the spine, hip and wrist.

*Who is at risk for osteoporosis?*

Osteoporosis is widespread, although some people are at higher risk: women, especially those over 50, thin-framed women, and those with family history of osteoporosis.

-In the 5 to 7 years around menopause, women can lose up to 20 % of their bone mass.

-While 80% of people with osteoporosis are women, this disease also affects 2 million men.

Symptoms

Early on with this condition, you may not even know it exists within your body. Osteoporosis is asymptomatic. Signs and symptoms will usually appear after you get a bone fracture. Some include:

- Fractures of the spine can cause severe back pain

-Loss of height over time

-A curvature spine due to collapsed vertebrae

-Fracture of the vertebra, wrist, hip or any other skeletal bone

Tests and diagnosis

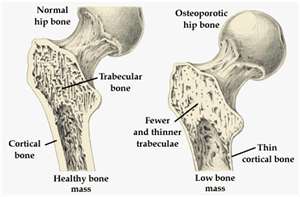
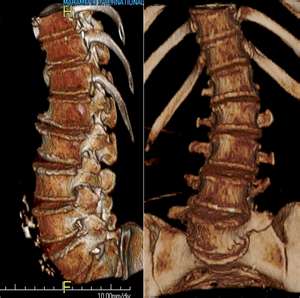
Doctors diagnose osteoporosis by measuring bone density.

The best screening test is dual energy X-ray absorptiometry (DXA). This procedure is quick, simple and gives accurate results. It measures the density of bones in your spine, hip and wrist. These bones are the ones more likely to be affected and to become fractured before another skeletal bone in the body. This test is also used to follow changes that may occur in bones over a period of time.

Treatments

A number of medications are available to help slow bone loss and maintain bone mass, including Bisphosphonates, Raloxifene and Calcitonin.

Hormone therapy, physical therapy and exercise can also help.

[](http://www.bing.com/images/search?q=osteoporosis&view=detail&id=D5F6A5D14A20900C819F6DA07C4CB6AAA11FFFBF&first=31&qpvt=osteoporosis&FORM=IDFRIR)[](http://www.bing.com/images/search?q=osteoporosis&view=detail&id=390298762274787689D3A87699FE5A6A8804722B&first=211&qpvt=osteoporosis&FORM=IDFRIR)

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